

Section 8

THE
ENGLISH HOME AND ANCESTRY
OF
RICHARD SEAMER OR SEMER
OF
HARTFORD, CONN.,

PROGENITOR OF THE SEYMOURS
OF
CONNECTICUT AND NEW YORK

COMMUNICATED TO
THE NEW ENGLAND HISTORICAL AND GENEALOGICAL REGISTER
BY
GEORGE D. SEYMOUR
FROM RESEARCHES BY J. GARDNER BARTLETT

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THE ENGLISH HOME AND ANCESTRY
OF
RICHARD SEAMER OR SEMER OF HARTFORD, CONN.

DURING the last half century various statements have appeared in print regarding the English home and ancestry of Richard Seamer or Semer, one of the early settlers of Hartford, Conn., and the progenitor of the Seymours of Connecticut and New York. Recent researches in England by Mr. J. Gardner Bartlett of Boston, Mass., and of London have definitely settled the question, and Richard Seamer now takes his place with men of co. Essex who followed Rev. Thomas Hooker to Hartford. Mr. Bartlett's investigations present the emigrant first at home at Sawbridgeworth, co. Herts, on the border of co. Essex, with his family and kinsfolk, then in the same company at Hartford, Conn., and finally at Norwalk, Conn., where he died and is buried. These researches, as thus far prosecuted, show no connection between the family of the emigrant to New England and the historic English family of Seymour. The writer takes great pleasure in communicating the results of Mr. Bartlett's work to the REGISTER, and hopes that at some time in the near future Mr. Bartlett may be asked by the American family to continue his investigations in England, in order to ascertain, if possible, the home of the emigrant's family before its settlement at Sawbridgeworth. The writer also hopes, now that the English home and ancestry of Richard Seamer, the emigrant, have been settled, that members of the family interested in its history may unite in arranging to have Miss Mary Kingsbury Talcott of Hartford prepare for the press and print the family history on which she has been so long at work.

The evidences discovered by Mr. Bartlett in England are as follows:

The Will* of JOHN SEAMER of Southhannyngefeilde, co. Essex [undated]. To Margerie Browne £3 in three months. To Elizabeth Browne 40s. at marriage or eighteen years. To Jone Hedgman 40s. in one year. To Rychard Seamer and Thomas Seamer 40s. each in two years. To Rychard Bell 6s. 8d. at marriage. To Mathew Walker 6s. 8d. in one year. All residue of goods to wife Elyne for life, with remainder to my son John Seamer, sole executor. Overseer: my son Wyllm Seamer. Witnesses: Rychard Marshall, Gilbert Amand. Proved 1550. (Commissary Court of London for Essex and Herts [Somerset House], 1550, original will.)

The Will of JOHN SEMARE of Sabridgeworth, co. Herts, 7 October 1605. To my son Robert a table. To my daughter Annie my "wafer yernes."† To my sons John and Peter 6d. each. To my daughters Jane and Dorothy a bed each. All residue to my wife [unnamed], who is to be executrix, and

* Of this and the following wills abstracts only are given.
† Waffle irons.

my son Robert is to be executor. Witnesses: Thomas Browne, Mathew Thorowgood. Proved 13 November 1605. (Commissary Court of London for Essex and Herts [Somerset House], 1605, no. 126, original will.)

The Will of WILLIAM WALLER of Sabridgeworth, co. Herts, 1 April 1603. To my wife Joan the messuage in Sabridgeworth where I now dwell, until my son William be of age; if he die before he be of age, remainder to said wife for life, with reversion at her death to my brother John's son William, who is to pay £10 to his brothers and sisters, £10 to the children of my sister Joan, £3 to the children of my sister Elizabeth Monk, and 40s. to my sister Bridget. All residue to my wife Joan, executrix. Overseers: Mr. Thomas Hart of Sabridgeworth and John Watson of Shering. Witnesses: Robert Snell, Thom. Hurst, John Watson. Proved 25 May 1603. (Commissary Court of London for Essex and Herts [Somerset House], 1603, no. 90, original will.)

The nuncupative Will of ROGER RUSCOE of Sabridgeworth, co. Herts, laborer, made 16 May 1618, gave all his goods to his wife Sarah. Witnesses: Tho: Crispe, George Jacob, Rich: Robson, Dorothy Tyler. The next day (on which he died) he gave said goods, after his wife's death, to his son John, except 20s. each to his daughters Mercy and Katherine. Witnesses: Avice Walden, Alice Heath. Administration was granted 26 June 1618 to relict Sarah. (Commissary Court of London for Essex and Herts [Somerset House], 1618, original will.)

FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH, CO. HERTS*

Baptisms

- 1562 Annis Seymer daughter of John 6 March [1562/3].
- 1565 [The baptisms of this year are missing.]
- 1567 Jone Seymer daughter of John 18 October.
- 1570 Mary Seymer 28 October.
- 1573 "Robert Seymer bapt y^e xxxth day of Nouember 1573."
- 1574 Jone Waller daughter of John 25 March.†
- 1576 John Seymer 30 September.
- 1576 John Waller 9 December.‡
- 1577 Annys Waller daughter of John 17 November.†
- 1578 "Elizabeth Waller was baptized y^e xijth of December."‡
- 1579 Mary Waller daughter of John 24 May.†
- 1579 Dorotey Seymor 6 September.
- 1581 Margaret Waller 6 August.‡
- 1582 Peter Seymer 11 February [1582/3].
- 1583 William Waller 1 September.‡
- 1583 William Seymer 9 February [1583/4].
- 1604 "Richard Seamer y^e sonne of Robert Seymer was baptised y^e xxvijth day of January" [1604/5].
- 1632 "Thomas the sonne of Richard & Mercy Seamer was Bapt. July 15."

* These registers were searched from their beginning in 1560 to 1650. All Seamer and Ruscoe entries were taken for that period, but no Waller items were taken after 1603.

No Seamer or Ruscoe entries appear in the registers of the eleven following parishes in the vicinity of Sawbridgeworth during the periods for which they have been severally examined, viz.: Bishops-Stortford, 1561-1650, Eastwick, 1555-1645, Much Hadham, 1559-1645, Little Hadham, 1559-1645, Hunsdon, 1546-1645, Thorley, 1539-1645, and Widford, 1562-1645, all in co. Herts; and Farnham, 1558-1645, Great Hallingbury, 1538-1645, Manuden, 1561-1645, and Stansted-Montfichet, 1558-1645, all in co. Essex. The early registers of Birchanger, Little Hallingbury, Hatfield-Broad-Oak, and Harlow, all in co. Essex, are lost.

† Other records prove that this infant was a child of John and Ellyn (Boram) Waller.

‡ Other records prove that this infant was a child of John and Elizabeth (Bayford) Waller.

1634 "Mary the daughter of Richard Seamer was Bapt. January 9" [1634/5]
 1635 Edward son of Nathaniel Seamer 16 April.
 1636 "Mercy the daughter of Richard Seamer was Bapt. July 8."
 1637 Roger son of John Ruscoe 16 April.

Marriages

1560 John Seymer and Jone Andrew 11 November.
 1562 John Seymer and Dyzory Porter 9 May.
 1572 John Waller and Ellyn Boram 7 September.
 1575 John Waller and Elizabeth Bayford 11 September.
 1583 William Waller and Jone Sheperdman 26 November.
 1584 Thomas Waller and Angell Canton 11 November.
 1603 "Robert Seymer and Elizabeth Waller wer married y^e xiv of November."
 1631 "Richard Seamer and Mercy Ruscoe ware maried the 18 April."

Burials

1561 "Jone Seymer was buried y^e thirde day of October."
 1587 William son of John Seymer 22 August.
 1593 John Waller 17 April.
 1605 "John Seymer y^e elder was buried y^e xxijth day of October."
 1634 "The widdow Ruscoe being about the age of 80 yeares was Buryed
 August 5."
 1635 "Mary the daughter of Richard Seamer was Buryed April 3."
 1635 Edward son of Nathaniell Seamer 11 August.
 1637 "Robert Seamer was Buryed August 23."

FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS OF WARE, CO. HERTS, 1558-1640

Baptisms

1617 Nathaniel Seamer son of John 19 October.
 1639 Edward Seamer son of Zacharias & Phebe 29 October.

Marriages

1616 John Seamer and Frauncis Deardes 5 February [1616/17].
 1637 Zacharias Seamer and Febe Bennett 13 November.

Burial

1617 Nathaniell Seamer 6 February [1617/18].

FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS OF GILSTON, CO. HERTS, 1558-1650

1639 Humfrey Browne and Elizabeth Seamer married by licence 5 Septem-
 ber.

FROM MARRIAGE LICENCES GRANTED BY THE BISHOP OF LONDON*

1569 John Seamer and Matthea Walker, spinster, of South Hanningfield.
 22 August.
 1589 William Compton, scrivener, and Ellen Waller, widow, of Sabridgeford
 co. Essex [sic], relict of John Waller, of same, weaver, 26 August.
 1604 Richard Seamer, of Ramsden Belhouse, co. Essex, carpenter, and Mar-
 garet Lylbourne, of Downham, said county, spinster, daughter of
 Henry Lylbourne, of Mourton, said county, husbandman; at Mour-
 ton aforesaid, 24 January [1604/5].

From the foregoing evidences, from records in New England, and
 from a few other sources which will be noted, the following Seamer
 pedigree has been compiled:

* These licences have been printed in *Publications of the Harleian Society*, vol. 25
 (Allegations for Marriage Licences issued by the Bishop of London, 1520 to 1610)

1. JOHN SEMARE, of Sawbridgeworth, co. Herts, England, born probably about 1535, grandfather of the emigrant Richard Seamer or Semer, is the earliest member of this line who has been positively traced. Where he was born is not known, but he evidently lived continuously at Sawbridgeworth from the time of his marriage until his death, his burial taking place on 23 Oct. 1605. He left a will, dated 7 Oct. 1605 and proved 13 Nov. 1605, an abstract of which has been given above. Sawbridgeworth is a rural parish in co. Herts, extending to the eastern boundary line of this county and bordering on co. Essex. It is about twenty-five miles northeast of London, and has at present a population of about two thousand. The local pronunciation of the name is "Sapsearch."

He married first, 11 Nov. 1560, JONE ANDROW, who was buried 3 Oct. 1561, leaving no issue; and secondly, 9 May 1562, DYZORY PORTER, who survived him.

Children by second wife, recorded at Sawbridgeworth:

- i. ANNIS, bapt. 6 Mar. 1562/3; mentioned in her father's will in 1605.
- ii. JONE, bapt. 18 Oct. 1567; mentioned in her father's will in 1605.
- iii. MARY, bapt. 28 Oct. 1570; not named in her father's will; probably d. young.
2. iv. ROBERT, bapt. 30 Nov. 1573; mentioned in his father's will in 1605.
- v. JOHN, bapt. 30 Sept. 1576; mentioned in his father's will in 1605; probably the John who m. at Ware, co. Herts (seven miles west of Sawbridgeworth), 5 Feb. 1616/17, FRANCES DEARDES. Child: 1. *Nathaniel*, bapt. at Ware 19 Oct. 1617; bur. there 6 Feb. 1617/18.
- vi. DOROTHY, bapt. 6 Sept. 1579; mentioned in her father's will in 1605.
- vii. PETER, bapt. 11 Feb. 1582/3; mentioned in his father's will in 1605; further history untraced.
- viii. WILLIAM, bapt. 9 Feb. 1583/4; bur. 22 Aug. 1587.

2. ROBERT SEYMER (*John*), of Sawbridgeworth, co. Herts, England, baptized there 30 Nov. 1573, was executor of the will of his father in 1605. His marriage in 1603 and the baptism in 1604/5 of one child, Richard, are recorded in Sawbridgeworth; but it is very probable that he soon afterwards removed to some neighboring parish, where he lived several years, while other children were born to him, the records of whose baptisms have not been found or may now be lost. He was buried at Sawbridgeworth 23 Aug. 1637. He left no will, nor can any record of administration on his estate be found.

He married at Sawbridgeworth, 14 Nov. 1603, ELIZABETH WALLER, baptized there 12 Dec. 1578, daughter and second child of John and Elizabeth (Bayford) Waller and niece of William Waller, the testator of 1603, an abstract of whose will has been given above.

Children:

3. i. RICHARD, the emigrant to New England, bapt. at Sawbridgeworth 27 Jan. 1604/5.
- ii. NATHANIEL (probably s. of Robert and probably b. abt. 1607). A Nathaniel Seamer, whose parentage has not been proved, but who may well have been a son of Robert, had one child, recorded at Sawbridgeworth: 1. *Edward*, bapt. 16 Apr. 1635; bur. 11 Aug. 1635.
- iii. ZECHARIAH (probably s. of Robert and probably b. abt. 1610). A Zechariah Seamer, whose parentage has not been established, is

found at Ware, co. Herts, only six miles west of Sawbridgeworth. He was very likely a son of Robert, as Richard Seamer, the emigrant to New England, had a son Zechariah, who probably was named for this presumed uncle. Zechariah Seamer of Ware m. there, 13 Nov. 1637, PHINE BENNETT. Child: 1. *Edward*, bapt. at Ware 29 Oct. 1639.

- iv. ELIZABETH (possibly dau. of Robert). An Elizabeth Seamer, whose parentage has not been established, m. at Gilston, co. Herts, the parish adjoining Sawbridgeworth on the southwest, 5 Sept. 1639, HUMPHREY BROWNE.
- v. MARY (possibly dau. of Robert). A Mary Simmor, commonly supposed to be a sister of the emigrant Richard Seamer, although no proof of any relationship has been found, m. (1) at Hartford, Conn., 29 Sept. 1644, THOMAS GRIDLEY, who d. there in 1655; m. (2) DEA. JOHN LANGDON of Farmington, Conn., who d. in 1689. Children by first husband: 1. *Samuel*, b. 25 Nov. 1647. 2. *Thomas*, b. in 1650. Children by second husband: 3. *Samuel*. 4. *Joseph*. 5. *Elizabeth*.

3. RICHARD SEAMER OR SEMER (*Robert, John*), the emigrant to New England, was baptized at Sawbridgeworth, co. Herts, England, 27 Jan. 1604/5, the eldest child of Robert and Elizabeth (Waller) Seymer. Between 1630 and 1637 the records of his marriage to Mercy Ruscoe, the baptisms of three of his children, and the burial of one of these children appear in the parish registers of Sawbridgeworth; but after 1637 no trace of him is to be found there or in any of the neighboring parishes. His father was buried 23 Aug. 1637; and as the spring was the usual time for emigration to New England, it may be concluded that he soon settled the affairs of his father's estate and in the spring of 1638 left England for New England, where he appears in 1639 as a proprietor and inhabitant of Hartford, Conn. The first mention of him at Hartford is in Feb. 1639/40, when he is found as a grantee from William Ruscoe, who was evidently a kinsman of Richard Seamer's wife.*

It seems probable that the emigration of Richard Seamer to New England was due to the influence of Rev. Thomas Hooker. This zealous Puritan minister and protochampion of American democracy was born in Leicestershire, England, in 1586, received from Emmanuel College, Cambridge, the degrees of A.B. in 1608 and A.M. in 1611, became a clergyman, and after 1620 was settled at Chelmsford, in the centre of the county of Essex, a region in which he taught and preached for several years until 1630, when he was silenced for non-conformity and driven into exile in Holland. During these years in Essex he secured a following throughout the county, and his influence also doubtless extended into the neighboring county of Herts, as Sawbridgeworth, the parish in that county nearest to Chelmsford, is less than fifteen miles to the west of the latter town and is directly on the ancient main highway between the towns of Chelmsford and Hertford. Hooker and some of his adherents came to New England in 1633, and others soon followed; at first they settled in New-

* *Vide infra*, p. 11.

towne (now Cambridge), Mass., but in 1635 they began to remove to Connecticut, where they founded the town of Hartford. Of the one hundred and thirty-six proprietors of Hartford listed in 1640, at least half were emigrants from the county of Essex, England; so that when Richard Seamer arrived in New England about 1638-9 and settled at Hartford, he was in a community where he must have found many former acquaintances from Old England besides the family of William Ruscoe, who were his wife's relatives.

In 1651 Richard Seamer and Nathaniel and John Ruscoe of Hartford (sons of William Ruscoe from Billericay, near Chelmsford, co. Essex, England) were among the fourteen original planters of Norwalk, Conn., at least seven of whom were of County Essex origin; and Richard Seamer and John Ruscoe soon removed from Hartford and settled at Norwalk, their homesteads facing each other on opposite sides of the same street. In 1655 Richard Seamer was chosen one of the townsmen (selectmen) of Norwalk, but he died about September of that year, leaving a will of which his wife's kinsman, John Ruscoe, was one of the witnesses. The page on which this will is recorded is now damaged; but what remains legible is as follows:

"[Torn and illegible] Richard Seamer [torn] being very week & sike [torn] god's great mercy in [torn] doe leve this as my [torn] doe first will and [torn] dust of wh it was [torn] the hands of god that gave it. [torn] bequeath unto my Loving wife Mercy Seamer my whole estate: viz: my house & lands Cattle and all my moveables: except that it is my will that my eldest sonn Thomas should have two steeres [illegible] yeare old and upward and my best cartt: thease to receive soon after my deceas: It is alsoe my Will that my other three sons, John & Zachary and Richard receive out of this totall estate the sum of forty pounds each of them viz: fourty pounds to John and fourty pounds to Zachary and forty pounds to Richard: duly and faythfully to be payd to them severally at the age of twenty-one years Unles the Executors of this my Will shall see cause to doe it sooner. It is alsoe my Will that my loving Wife should have the dispose of my three sons John Zachary & Richard untill such time as they shall be fit to receive and dispose of ther Estate: It is alsoe my Will and apoyntment that my loving Wife Mercy: Togather with my faythfull freind Richard Olmsted be the sole Executors and Administrators of this my last Will and Testament The aforesaid Legasies and all Lawfull debts and demands duly discharged by my loving Wife Mercy: It is my Will that shee posses and enjoy all the rest of my Estate. To this my last will and testament I have set to my hand this 29th July 1655: The mark of Richard Seamer. In the presence of us, Thomas Handford, Jno Rescoe." Proved 25 October 1655. The inventory, taken by Mathew Campfeild and Richard Olmsted, amounted to £255. 9s. (Fairfield Probate Records, vol. 1, p. 6.)

Richard Seamer married at Sawbridgeworth, co. Herts, England, 18 Apr. 1631, MERCY RUSCOE, born probably about 1610, daughter of Roger Ruscoe of Sawbridgeworth, the testator of 1618, an abstract of whose will has been given

Blanks for signatures
Free library

above, by his wife Sarah, and probably granddaughter of the Widow Hannah Ruscoe who was buried there 5 Aug. 1634, aged about 80 years. Mercy (Ruscoe) Seamer came with her husband to New England about 1638-9, survived him, and married secondly, 25 Nov. 1655, as his second wife, John Steel of Farmington, Conn., formerly of Hartford, who was secretary of the Colony of Connecticut 1636-1639, and deputy many times between 1639 and 1657, and who died in 1665. On 30 Oct. 1668 John Semer, Zackery Semer, and Richard Semer acknowledged the receipt from Mr. John Steel, deceased, of six score pounds sterling, or forty pounds each, in full account of the legacies due them by the last will of their father Richard Semer, deceased, the witnesses to this receipt being Samuell Steel and Tho: Semer. (Fairfield Probate Records, vol. 2, p. 33.)

Children:

- i. THOMAS, bapt. at Sawbridgeworth, co. Herts, Eng., 15 July 1632; d. at Norwalk, Conn., abt. Oct. 1712; m. (1) at Norwalk, 5 Jan. 1653/4, HANNAH MARVIN, b. in co. Essex, Eng., abt. Oct. 1634, d. after 1680, dau. of Matthew and Elizabeth; m. (2) ELIZABETH _____. He was brought to New England by his parents abt. 1638-9, when he was abt. six years old, and lived at Hartford, Conn., until abt. 1651, when he went with his parents to Norwalk. At his father's death in 1655 he was the only one of the children of age; and as his mother soon remarried and removed to Farmington, Conn., with her younger children, Thomas succeeded to his father's lands in Norwalk, where he lived until his death. His will, dated 22 Sept. 1712, was proved 7 Nov. 1712. Children by first wife, b. at Norwalk: 1. *Hannah*, b. 12 Dec. 1654; m. Francis Bushnell. 2. *Abigail*, b. in Jan. 1655/6; m. Thomas Picket. 3. *Mary* (twin), b. in Sept. 1658; m. Joshua Bushnell. 4. *Sarah* (twin), b. in Sept. 1658. 5. *Thomas*, b. in Sept. 1660; d. young. 6. *Elizabeth*, b. in Dec. 1663; probably d. young. 7. *Mercy*, b. in Nov. 1666. 8. *Matthew*, b. in May 1669; m. Sarah Hayes. 9. *John*, b. in 1671; m. Sarah Gregory. 10. *Elizabeth*, b. in Dec. 1673. 11. *Rebecca*, b. in Jan. 1675/6.
- ii. MARY, bapt. at Sawbridgeworth, co. Herts, Eng., 9 Jan. 1634/5; bur. there 3 Apr. 1635.
- iii. MERCY, bapt. at Sawbridgeworth, co. Herts, Eng., 8 July 1636; no further record of her has been found.
- iv. JOHN, b., probably in New England, abt. 1639; d. at Hartford, Conn., in 1713; m. abt. 1665 MARY WATSON, dau. of John and Margaret of Hartford. After the death of his father in 1655 he probably lived a few years with his mother in Farmington, Conn., and abt. 1663 settled at Hartford, Conn., where he lived until his death. His will, dated 10 Dec. 1712, was proved 3 Aug. 1713. Children, b. at Hartford: 1. *John*, b. 12 June 1666; d. 17 May 1748; m. 19 Dec. 1683 Elizabeth Webster, dau. of Hon. Robert and Susanna (Treat); had issue. 2. *Thomas*, b. 12 Mar. 1668/9; m. (1) in Feb. 1700 Ruth Norton; m. (2) 21 June 1711 Mary Waters. 3. *Mary*, b. in Nov. 1670. 4. *Zachary*, b. 22 Dec. 1672; d. young. 5. *Margaret*, b. 17 Jan. 1673/4. 6. *Richard*, b. 11 Feb. 1675/6. 7. *Jonathan*, b. 10 Jan. 1677/8; d. young. 8. *Nathaniel*, b. 6 Nov. 1680; d. young. 9. *Zachary*, b. 10 Jan. 1683/4.
- v. ZECHARIAH, b. at Hartford, Conn., abt. 1642; d. at Wethersfield, Conn., in Aug. 1702, aged 60 years; m. at Wethersfield, 9 Feb. 1687/8, MARY GRITT. After the death of his father in 1655 he probably lived for several years with his mother at Farmington, Conn., and settled later at Wethersfield. His will, dated 14 Apr.

1702, was proved 11 Nov. 1702. Children, b. at Wethersfield: 1. *Mary*, b. 26 Jan. 1688/9; m. Henry Grimes. 2. *Elizabeth*, b. 28 Jan. 1691/2; m. Gideon Belding. 3. *Abigail*, b. 15 May 1694; m. James Ensign. 4. *Ruth*, b. 10 Apr. 1699.

vi. CAPT. RICHARD, of Farmington, Conn., b. at Hartford, Conn., probably abt. 1645; d. in 1710; m. abt. 1674 HANNAH WOODRUFF, b. abt. 1648, dau. of Matthew and Hannah of Farmington. Administration on his estate was granted 4 Dec. 1710 to his widow Hannah and son Samuel. Children, b. at Farmington: 1. *Hannah*, b. abt. 1675; m. (1) 29 Nov. 1692 Joseph Pomeroy of Northampton, Mass.; m. (2) 23 Oct. 1713 Josiah Hale of Suffield, Mass. (now Suffield, Conn.). 2. *Samuel*, b. abt. 1678. 3. *Mercy*, bapt. 14 Jan. 1681/2; m. George Hubbard. 4. *Ebenezer*, bapt. 1 Feb. 1683/4; m. Abigail Hollister. 5. *Jonathan*, bapt. 17 Apr. 1687; m. Eunice Hollister.

ADDENDA

I. THE RUSCOE FAMILY OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH, CO. HERTS

1. ROGER RUSCOE or RESCOE, of Sawbridgeworth, co. Herts, England, born probably about 1585, died 17 May 1618, having made his nuncupative will on the previous day.* He married SARAH —, who survived him. He was probably a son of Widow Hannah Ruscoe, who was buried at Sawbridgeworth 5 Aug. 1634, aged about 80 years. This family name is extremely rare in England, having been found in a very few instances and only in the counties of Essex and Herts.† The earliest mention yet found of the name is in 1545, when John Rouscoue, alien, was assessed 3s. 4d. for goods at Great Dunmow, co. Essex, in a subsidy of 37 Henry VIII. (Lay Subsidies, 109/297.) This place is about ten miles east of Sawbridgeworth and the same distance north of Chelmsford. The name Ruscoe is probably of Flemish or Dutch origin, and evidently the family came into England during the sixteenth century, when there was considerable Huguenot immigration from across the English Channel, especially of textile workers, who settled in the cloth-manufacturing towns in Essex and Suffolk.

Children:

- i. MERCY, b. abt. 1610; m. (1) at Sawbridgeworth, 18 Apr. 1631, RICHARD SEAMER, with whom she emigrated to New England abt. 1638-9; m. (2) 25 Nov. 1655 JOHN STEEL of Farmington, Conn., formerly of Hartford, Conn. (Vide supra, p. 111.)
- ii. JOHN, b. abt. 1613. Child: 1. *Roger*, bapt. at Sawbridgeworth 16 Apr. 1637.
- iii. KATHERINE, b. abt. 1616.

II. THE RUSCOE FAMILY OF BILLERICAY, CO. ESSEX, AND OF NEW ENGLAND

1. WILLIAM RUSCOE or RESCOE, born about 1593, came to New England in the spring of 1635 in the ship *Increase*, the passenger list stating that W^m Rusco, husbandman, aged 41, his wife Rebecca, aged 40, and his four children, Sara, aged 9, Marie, aged 7, Samvel aged 5, and W^m, aged 1, embarked at London 13 Apr. 1635, the father

* Vide supra, p. 4.

† Roscoe, an old family name found in Lancashire and Cheshire, is of different origin from the family name under consideration.

having a certificate from the minister of Billericay, co. Essex, that he was not a subsidy man. (Drake's "Founders of New England," p. 22.) Evidences in New England show that, in addition to the four children above-named, William Ruscoe had also two older sons, named Nathaniel and John, the omission of whose names from the shipping list seems strange. This William Ruscoe was doubtless a near relative of Roger Ruscoe of Sawbridgeworth, probably a younger brother. The name is variously spelled Ruscoe, Rescoe, Reskewe, Reskoe, Rescue, Rescwe, etc. Tradition in the Ruscoe family of Norwalk, Conn., has persistently claimed a Huguenot origin for the family.

William Ruscoe was evidently an adherent of Rev. Thomas Hooker, as he first settled with the latter at Newtowne (now Cambridge), Mass., and then in 1636 followed him to Hartford, Conn., where in Feb. 1639/40 he appears as a grantor to Richard Seemer, and on 14 Dec. 1650 as a grantee from Richard Seemer. (Hartford Land Records, vol. 1, pp. 167, 77.) In Feb. 1649/50 he was appointed to keep the prison at Hartford. Before 27 Aug. 1657 he had followed his son John to Norwalk, Conn., as he appears in a list of inhabitants there at that date. He continues to appear in Norwalk records until as late as 15 July 1665, when as "William Rescoe of Norwalk" he sold his homestead there to Joseph Fenn for £60, his son, "John Ruskoe," being one of the witnesses to this deed. He then removed across the Sound to Jamaica, L. I., where he died in 1682.

The Will of WILLIAM RUSCOE of Jamaica, L. I., 5 August 1680. To son John, now living in Norwalk in New England, 5s. To the children of my daughter Sarah £20 among them, when of age. To Alice, daughter of my son Samuel, pewter utensils. To son Samuel all lands, houses, etc. Wife [unnamed] to be executrix. Witnesses: Peter Smyth, William Creed, Thomas Williams. Proved 13 December 1682. (Abstracts of Wills on File in the Surrogate's Office, City of New York, vol. 1, p. 121, published in *Collections of the New-York Historical Society*.)

He married first, in England, about 1620, REBECCA ——, born about 1594, who came with him to New England in the spring of 1635 but died soon thereafter; and secondly, at Cambridge, Mass., in Feb. or Mar. 1635/6, HESTER MUSSE, a widow. On 24 Mar. 1635/6 "I William Ruske now husband of the lat widdow Hester must haue by her Consent sold vnto John Beniamin one accar of of grownd," etc. (Proprietors' Records of Cambridge, p. 36.)

Children by first wife, born in England:

- i. NATHANIEL, b. abt. 1620; d. at Haddam, Conn., while on a visit there, in July 1673; m. at Hartford, Conn., 11 Nov. 1645, JOANNA CORLET, probably a sister of Elijah Corlet of Cambridge, Mass., the famous schoolmaster. He is mentioned as a proprietor of Hartford, Conn., in 1640, and as one of the original patentees of Norwalk, Conn., in 1651, but he did not remove from Hartford. On 1 May 1667 his father, William Ruscoe, conveyed to him all his lands in Hartford that were then undisposed of. (Hartford Land Records, vol. 1, p. 469.) His nuncupative will, made 23 July 1673, gave half his estate to his wife and half to his son Nathaniel except a heifer to his kinswoman, Mary Browne, and a horse and a pig to Benjamin [sic, Benoni] Newton, the latter being his apprenticed servant. The son Nathaniel and widow Joanna made an agreement about the estate on 13 Aug. 1673. (Hartford

Probate Records, vol. 3, pp. 109-110.) Child: 1. *Nathaniel*, of Hartford, and later of Southampton, L. I., b. abt. 1650.

ii. JOHN, b. abt. 1623; d. intestate at Norwalk, Conn., in 1702; m. at Hartford, Conn., 2 Jan. 1650/1, REBECCA BEEBE. He was of Hartford until 1651, when he became one of the fourteen original proprietors of Norwalk, Conn., whither he removed with Richard Seamer, whose will he witnessed in 1655. The inventory of his estate was taken 20 Nov. 1702, and the estate was divided by agreement among his heirs, Thomas Ruscoe, Mary Ruscoe, Rebecca Browne, Ruth Abbott, Sarah Ruscoe, and son-in-law William Lees. (Fairfield Probate Records, vol. 5, pp. 1-2.) Children, b. at Norwalk: 1. *Mary*, d. unm. 2. *John*, d. young. 3. *Rebecca*, m. James Brown. 4. *Thomas*, d. in 1739; m. Abigail —; nine children. 5. *Sarah*, m. in 1703 Thomas Rockwell. 6. *Ruth*, m. John Abbott. 7. *Mehitable*, m. William Lees.

iii. SARAH, b. abt. 1625; d. at Saybrook, Conn., in Jan. 1687/8; m. (1) at Hartford, Conn., 10 Dec. 1646, HENRY COLE, with whom she resided at Middletown and later at Wallingford, Conn., where he d. in 1676; m. (2) in 1679 ROBERT BULL. Children by first husband: 1. *Henry*, b. 20 Sept. 1647. 2. *James*, b. 8 Feb. 1649/50. 3. *John*, b. 14 Feb. 1651/2. 4. *William*, b. 25 Apr. 1653. 5. *Sarah*, b. 22 Oct. 1654. 6. *Samuel*, b. 10 Sept. 1656. 7. *Mary*, b. 11 June 1658. 8. *Joanna*, b. 1 Aug. 1661. 9. *Abigail*, b. 28 Oct. 1664. 10. *Rebecca*, b. 8 Apr. 1667.

iv. MARY, b. abt. 1627; m. at Hartford, Conn., 19 Aug. 1647, HUGH WELLES of Wethersfield, Conn., who d. at Wethersfield 22 Dec. 1678. Children: 1. *John*, b. 24 May 1648. 2. *Mary*, b. 15 Aug. 1649; d. young. 3. *Mary*, b. 15 Oct. 1650. 4. *Rebecca*, b. 10 Jan. 1651/2. 5. *Sarah*.

v. SAMUEL, b. abt. 1629; d. young.

vi. WILLIAM, b. abt. 1633; d. unm. before 1680.

Child by second wife:

vii. SAMUEL, b. at Hartford, Conn., 12 Mar. 1647/8; m. MERCY —. He removed with his father to Norwalk, Conn., and later to Jamaica, L. I., where he succeeded to his father's homestead. He had issue.